

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of harvesting a crop in a field, the crop having a stem and leaves, the method comprising:
 - stripping leaves from the stem at a first time; and
 - harvesting the stem at a second time after the first time.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the stem is cut at the first time and allowed to dry in the field until the second time.
3. A method according to claim 1, wherein the crop is alfalfa.
4. A method according to claim 1, wherein the crop is mint.
5. A method according to claim 1, wherein the crop is barley.
6. A method of harvesting a crop having leaves and a stem, comprising:
 - stripping the leaves from the stem at a first time, while leaving the stem standing;
 - allowing leaves to regrow on the stem;
 - stripping the leaves from the stem and cutting the stem;
 - allowing the stem to dry;
 - harvesting the stem.
7. A method according to claim 6, wherein the crop comprises alfalfa.
8. A method according to claim 6, wherein the stem is left in the field to dry.
9. A method of managing protein content of a crop having a first portion having a first nutritional content and a second portion having a second nutritional content, comprising:
 - removing the first portion of the crop from the second portion;

allowing the first portion to regrow and removing regrown first portions from the second portion a predetermined number of times;

harvesting the second portion a predetermined number of times during selected removing of the first portion; and

mixing a first amount of the first portion with a second amount of the second portion to achieve desired nutritional content.

10. A method according to claim 9, wherein the crop comprises alfalfa and the first portion comprises alfalfa leaves and the second portion comprises alfalfa stems.

11. A method according to claim 9, wherein the second portion is cut and dried in the field while harvesting the first portion.

12. A method according to claim 9, wherein the nutritional content comprises protein content.

13. A method of harvesting a crop, comprising:

harvesting a percentage of a first portion of a crop having a first nutritional content; harvesting a second portion of the crop having a second nutritional content separately from the first portion ;

mixing a first amount of the first portion with a second amount of the second portion to achieve a desired nutritional content.

14. A method according to claim 13, wherein the first portion of the crop is cut at a first time and allowed to dry in the field until a second time when harvesting the second portion of the crop.

15. A method according to claim 13, wherein the first portion of the crop comprises leaves and the second portion of the crop comprises a stem.

16. A method according to claim 13, wherein the crop is alfalfa.

17. A method according to claim 13, wherein the crop is mint.

18. A method according to claim 13, wherein the crop is barley.